RAGGED SCHOOL UNION QUARTERLY RECORD.

APRIL, 1883.

THE COMING CONFERENCE.

The Ragged Parliament referred to in the last number is formally announced in the following circular :—

RAGGED SCHOOL UNION,
Exeter Hall, London, W.C., Feb. 27th, 1883.

SIR,—The Committee of the Ragged School Union, acting on behalf of a large number of institutions spread over London and the country, for the purpose of benefiting poor and neglected children, have observed with much concern the feeling which has been recently promulgated—viz., that the establishment of Board Schools has rendered their further efforts on behalf of poor children unnecessary.

While deploring this feeling, the Committee cannot disguise the fact that to a large extent it has paralysed the efforts of the managers of many of the local institutions, and reduced the income and the consequent ability of the Ragged School Union to help them in their arduous and self-imposed labours.

The Committee of the Union are most anxious to avert the mischief that must ensue should any of the schools situated in the poor and most densely populated districts be closed; they are moreover considering the condition of the Ragged School movement under the altered state of education in England.

It is well known that this movement embraces a great variety of benevolent efforts to benefit both the young and the old, such as cannot in the nature of things be included in the arrangements of any ordinary school, be it Board or voluntary.

Under these circumstances the Committee have resolved to summon a Conference, to be held in Exeter Hall, on Wednesday, April 11th, for the purpose of deliberating on the best means to be employed in consolidating, and, if possible, furthering the work of the Union, which, for a period of nearly forty years, has continued to exert a beneficial influence upon the classes for whom it was established.

It is proposed to invite to this Conference persons interested in promoting the welfare of the poor, who, by their wise judgment may help in forming a right public opinion on this question.

May I, in the name of the Committee of the Ragged School Union, therefore, take the liberty of asking your kind co-operation at such Conference, being sure that you will by your name and influence greatly help the success of the cause we have at heart?

As soon as the details are completed I shall take care they are communicated to you; meanwhile, your adhesion to the proposed Conference, and your authority to place your name among those who purpose taking part in its deliberations, will be greatly valued, and I pray you to oblige us by sending a reply to that effect as soon as your convenience will permit to the Secretary, Mr. John Kirk, Exeter Hall, Strand.

I have the honour to remain,
Your obedient servant,
SHAFTESBURY, *President.*

We are obliged to go to press before all the details of the Conference are finally settled, but we are happy to announce that promises of co-operation have been received from the following, viz.:—

His Grace the Duke of Westminster.
The Earl Cairns.
The Earl Aberdeen.
The Baroness Burdett-Coutts.
The Right Hon. W. H. Smith, M.P.
Sir John Kennaway, M.P.
Sir William McArthur, M.P.
Sir Harry Verney.
Samuel Morley, Esq., M.P.
Professor Leone Levi.
Rev. Canon Fleming.
Hon. and Rev. E. Carr-Glyn.
Miss Hesba Stretton.

In addition to a large number of friends in town and country well known for their sympathy and efforts in behalf of the neglected poor.

Admission by tickets, which can be had on application at the Society's Office, Exeter Hall, Strand.

RAGGED SCHOOL UNION CONFERENCES.

(Reprinted from the April number of the *Sunday at Home* by the kind permission of the Editor.)

THIRTY-NINE years ago, on April 11, 1844, the first Conference was held. It consisted of four men meeting in a private house; not philosophers, nor mighty men, nor noble; yet men whose name should be held in honour—Mr. Starey, a carriage-builder; Mr. Locke, a woollen-draper; Mr. Morrison, a city missionary; and Mr. Moulton, a dealer in second-hand tools. A small band of unknown men, assembling at night, like a little knot of conspirators, to enter into a close alliance, and lay plots against a common enemy. The league was made that night, and the minutes of this meeting form the first records of the Ragged School Union. In the following November, Mr. Locke, a shrewd Scotchman, proposed to his colleagues to invite Lord Shaftesbury, then Lord Ashley, to become President of their Union, which office he happily accepted, and has happily retained until the present year. Lord Ashley's reply to Mr. Locke's application ends with these words: "God be with us!" Thirty-nine years have passed by: and we, looking down the long vista, can trace the faint footprints from the first, and say, with thankful hearts, "God has been in the midst of them all the way."

Before the reign of our Queen Victoria very little thought had been bestowed on children. The State left them almost entirely to the care and mercy of their parents, placing them practically in the position, a relic of Roman law, of being their parents' property. They were sent to sea; they were sold as chimney-climbers; they were driven into factories, and buried underground in mines, at an age when they would now hardly be out of the infant school. In agricultural counties the children of labourers were taken from their homes at the age of eight, and apprenticed to the ratepayers as servants, and those who have spent their own childhood in the country can recall the memory of little creatures employed from dawn to dark in scaring birds from the growing corn, their monotonous and mournful cry being as familiar to the ear as the "cuckoo's two-fold shout." The first among our English poetesses wrote her impassioned "Cry of the Children," which touched to the quick the hearts of all who heard it.

"And well may the children weep before you!
They are weary ere they run;
They have never seen the sunshine, nor the glory
Which is brighter than the sun.
They know the grief of man, without his wisdom;
They sink in man's despair, without its calm;
Are slaves without the liberty of Christdom;
Are martyrs, by the pang without the palm;
Are worn, as if with age, yet unretrievingly
The harvest of its memories cannot reap;
Are orphans of the earthly love and heavenly.
Let them weep! let them weep!"

It is true the children of the decent workmen were being taught in British and National Schools; but in the close and foul slums of our great cities thousands upon thousands of children swarmed, who never heard a word of kindness, or knew an hour's respite from terror. They were unfed, unwashed, and unclad, growing up in ignorance and crime, a race of untutored savages, as Lord Shaftesbury sorrowfully called them.

Here and there were scattered a very few Ragged Schools; but there was no union among them, and each one was but as the glimmer of a glowworm in the dense darkness surrounding it. The teachers stood as solitary outposts in an enemy's country, with no common rallying-point. A few little schoolrooms scattered here and there; a score or two of ragged children creeping timidly over their door-steps; a small band of voluntary teachers!

"Then said Jesus, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I liken it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew and it waxed a great tree, and the birds of the air lodged in the branches of it."

The smallest of all seeds perhaps it looked to the founders of the Ragged School Union when they cast it—shall we say haphazard?—into their Lord's garden; for surely none of them knew how it would grow into a tree as of the Lord's own right-hand planting, stretching out goodly and far-reaching branches. Beneath it 300,000 children in London alone have been snatched from the ranks of the dangerous and criminal classes. A whole army of voluntary teachers have fought under its shadow a good fight against ignorance, wretchedness, and vice. And many of those little ones, whose angels do always behold the face of our

Father which is in heaven, have soared upwards from its shelter to find an eternal refuge beneath the everlasting wings.

For in little more than two years after the union of the Ragged Schools, another step was taken for the welfare of the most destitute of the little scholars. A Ragged School Refuge was opened in Old Pye Street, Westminster, one of the worst and poorest slums within sound of the Abbey bells. "It is planted," says the report of 1847, "in the very locality where the objects of its bounty most abound; it offers a refuge to the poor outcast child, who may be on the brink of committing theft, to supply its bodily wants; it affords him instruction as to his moral and religious duties, and finds him bread to eat while he learns them; it holds up to him, and to his associates or parents, what Christianity can do, and is doing for him; and so the school becomes a kind of lighthouse or beacon in the great ocean of life, to warn the little voyager how he may best avoid the rocks of error and misery, and at last, by God's blessing, reach the haven of truth and happiness.

Very shortly afterwards a second Refuge was opened in Grotto Passage, Marylebone. But these Refuges provided food, shelter, and training only for the day. When night came on, with its dreary darkness, and biting cold, and terrible temptations, those who had no homes had to turn out into the inhospitable streets. The hearts of Ragged School teachers could not bear this, and almost at the same time two Ragged School Night-refuges were begun, one in Playhouse Yard, and the other in Field Lane, Smithfield. Here the shivering, hungry, and homeless boys and girls found a place to sleep in, and a piece of bread to eat. Other temporary homes were speedily established, in which night by night flocks of rough and ragged children were sheltered, who otherwise must have slept in any hole or corner they could find out of doors. But they were flitting tenants, coming and going at short notice. It was necessary to take another step to secure their welfare. Industrial Schools were opened to train the children to steady industry. Already, in 1846, King Edward Ragged School and Refuge had been started in Spitalfields, and was doing good work. Every year saw fresh schools of this kind springing into existence, and in 1856 the Reformatory and Refuge Union was formed by members of the Ragged School Union Committee, to

assist in rescuing outcast, homeless, and destitute children, by providing permanent homes, where they can be sheltered for a sufficient length of time to teach them some trade or industry by which they can afterwards earn their own living. It is not our object now to inquire into the work of this off-shoot of the Ragged School Union; but let it be remembered that the thousands of children who have been and are now sheltered and cared for in Reformatories and Refuges would be at this moment peopling our workhouses and gaols, and perpetuating a helpless race of "untutored savages."

Still there were ragged scholars with homes, but without occupation. In 1851, the year of the Great Exhibition, a happy thought was struck out in the Ragged School Union Committee. A number of their most deserving boys were furnished with a uniform, and set down in the busiest corners, with brushes and blacking, to clean the muddy or dusty boots of the hosts of visitors thronging into London. The Shoeblack Brigades have been in active existence ever since, and have given many a lad a good start into life.

In 1851 also was begun an eminently practical charity in connection with Hill Street Ragged School, where an Infant Day Nursery was opened, and proved to be so useful in every way that the Ragged School Union Committee urged its general adoption. Mothers' Meetings, again, were inaugurated by Mrs. Bayly, the author of "Ragged Homes," in a building erected for a Ragged School, and these meetings have since become an almost essential part in all Ragged School operations.

And what shall we say of Provident Funds and Penny Banks, of Sewing Classes, of Bands of Hope, of Ragged Churches and Chapels, of the Prizes given yearly to all scholars who have been in service for twelve months in the same place, and with good characters from their masters and mistresses? Their very names are full of promise of the good they will do.

But we must not pass over that prettiest and simplest of Christian charities, now forming one of the most pleasant sights of London on a summer's morning. What would the little chimney-climbers and factory workers of bygone days have thought of that happy vision of crowded vans, laden with merry children, who wave little banners as they go out for a day's treat

in the country, and come back again at night crowned with wild flowers? In 1855 Lord Shaftesbury himself made the first appeal to the public for help in giving Ragged Scholars "a day's sport at the Crystal Palace, or in places like Greenwich Park." The suggestion was taken up warmly, and there are few children now in London who have not a chance of one day's happiness in the year. This day in the country has developed lately into efforts to secure for sickly children the benefit of a week or a fortnight in the sweet, fresh air, and amid rural scenes. Truly in this way, as in many others, children are now led into pleasant paths; and the rough roads of life are made somewhat smoother for their little feet.

But to those who will take the trouble to look over a Handbook of the Charities of London it will be an astonishment to find how almost all the Homes, the Orphanages, the Hospitals, and the Schools for destitute children have been founded since the Ragged School Union brought their wretchedness into broader light. I do not say they owe their origin to it. I would rather say that this modern tide of charity to children which has known no ebb, broke over its bar, and began to flow, when Lord Ashley brought the miseries of factory children before the compelled notice of the country. The hearts of Englishmen, who had not long before liberated millions of slaves, could not endure the fact of slavery in their midst. No more should children be sacrificed to Mammon!

> "They, where they saw God's images cast down,
> Lifted them up again, and blew the dust
> From the worn features and disfigured limb."

The tree planted thirty-nine years ago is still standing in the Lord's vineyard. When He comes seeking fruit thereon, does He find none? Is there nothing but leaves? Is He about to say, "Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?" Let us look at what it was doing last year, in 1882. It had thirty-seven Day Schools, with an average attendance of 4,367 scholars, puny, ill-trained, half-naked children, who would have been unwelcome and misplaced among a better clad and better fed class of scholars. It had sixty-three Industrial Classes, where 2,773 children were instructed in some handicraft which would help them in the battle of life. It had 155 Week Night Schools, with 4,868 neglected

boys and girls attending them, mostly too old to be forced into the Board Schools. And, the greatest work of all, it had 203 Sunday Schools, held in the afternoon and evening, in which 36,734 children received religious teaching from 3,157 voluntary teachers, Christ-like men and women, who give up their Sabbath rest to follow thus laboriously in their Lord's footsteps.

Then for the work carried on in some of these schools, let us go to the George Yard Ragged Schools in Whitechapel. The fund for their erection was started under the ominous name of "Guilt Gardens;" and words would fail to describe or enumerate the forms of vice and sin flourishing within a very small radius of these little gardens planted in their midst. They were opened in 1854. When I first saw them the children stood as thickly as merchants upon 'Change; they had no seats except on the floor, and when in class they stood in circles chalked upon the ground, with their little ragged teachers or monitors in the centre. All that has passed away, like many another painful yet picturesque sight. The list of operations connected with these schools is long enough to try our patience; but it is worth following to the end. For the young there are Sunday Schools, free Ragged Day Schools, Week Evening Classes, Children's Services, Shelter for Outcast Boys, Shelter for Houseless Girls, Invalid Children's Dinner, Farthing Bank, Sewing Classes, Infant Nursery, Library, Band of Hope, Rations of Food to hungry children, Class for Cookery, Baths and Lavatory. For grown-up persons, Evangelistic Services, Lodging-house Meetings, Open-air Services, Prayer Meetings, Tract Distributing and Visiting Society, Mothers' Meeting and Clothing Club, Temperance Meeting, Mission to Inebriate Women and Girls, Bible Classes, Working Men's Benefit Society, Mutual Free Labour Loan Society, "Emily" Loan Fund, House-to-house Visitation, Sewing Classes for poor women, Daily Visitation by an Evangelist, Bible Flower Mission.

Nor does George Yard stand alone in the use of these numerous agencies; we might name the Field Lane Ragged Schools, the Costers' Mission, and several others. But the Union is less necessary to these large and important missions than it is to small and struggling efforts made in obscure localities. In every neighbourhood there is now and then a chance for Christian workers to buy or hire some local hall or club-room, which is

easily turned into a Ragged School, and becomes the centre of much earnest work beyond the mere school. If the Union, for lack of funds, must abandon these little outposts, a great civilising and Christianising power will be lost, and the deserted ground will be quickly seized upon by agencies for evil. The large institutions may flourish on the subscriptions of independent supporters, but the small ones must lose their footing, and the unaided bands of voluntary workers, like the pioneers of an army which has treacherously stolen away, must fall back sorrowfully before the successful inroads of the enemy.

But there are Board schools supported by the rates for the the education of the children. Yes. But will our Board schools maintain Penny Banks and Bands of Hope for their scholars? Can they give shelter to outcast boys and girls? Will the school-rooms be open in the evening for Mothers' Meetings, and Clothing Clubs, or for Lectures and Concerts to form a counter attraction to the gaily lighted gin-palace? Shall we ever meet the masters, with their staff of teachers, visiting the low lodging-houses and wretched dwellings where the parents of their scholars live? No. The work paid for by the State can never be the same as that which is done for the love of Christ. Yet if in the course of time all the Ragged Day Schools, which is the smallest part of the work of the Union, are swallowed up by the Board schools, there are still excellent and important purposes to which the buildings could be appropriated during the working hours of the day. Let us have labour schools, where boys and girls can be taught some useful handicraft. Surely a boy would be better fitted for labour at home, or for emigration, if he could mend his own clothes or cobble his own boots, or knew how to handle a carpenter's tools. Whilst a girl who knew how to sew and knit and wash, who could use a broom skilfully and scrub a floor well, would be more ready for service either at home or in the colonies. Let the Ragged Schools become labour schools, and presently the State, taking another hint from the Church of Christ, will clear our streets of the idle and loafing lads and the wild girls who are too old for school, and will insist upon them learning some useful work, as it now insists upon them learning to read and write.

But how far off is that goal of our hopes! In the meanwhile, if any one doubts of the need of Ragged Schools, let him go into the

lanes and alleys of our city. Let him only keep his eyes open along the busy thoroughfares, and count the bare-headed, bare-footed little urchins, and the shivering little girls in their thin rags who pass to and fro with the crowd. There are thousands of them; and what are we to do with them? Shall we place them side by side with the well-fed, well-clothed children, who fill the benches of our Board schools, and demand the same work from them, and require them to submit to the same discipline? The half-starved, half-naked child, who has grown up amid depraved and vicious surroundings, is it possible he can avail himself of the teaching which suit his happier school-fellows? No; a thousand times no!

I repeat there are swarms of such children, stunted alike in body and mind; and the happy hours that are passing over the heads of our little ones are ripening these unhappy ones into thieves and prostitutes. They are the prizes for which two great powers are contending. If Christ wins them not, Satan captures them. If we Christians neglect them evil will cling closely to them. Our agencies are at work; but not, I fear, with the ceaseless and unwearying energy of wickedness. The State has remedied many of the evils under which childhood lay forty years ago; but when the State shall have done all it can, the greatest part of the work is left untouched. They may be taught to read and write; but beneath the low depths of ignorance there are deeper depths of crime and vice, and unless Christian love reaches these, "the children's souls, which God is calling sunward, will spin on blindly in the dark."

HESBA STRETTON.

ABOUT SOME POOR CHILDREN.

(From the *Congregationalist.*)

I WANT to tell the young folks about some poor children in Manchester. It was six o'clock one Tuesday evening in January when a dear friend and I set out to visit the soup kitchen of Mr. Superintendent Bent. A keen east wind was blowing with sudden gusts that every now and then almost lifted us from the ground. To a healthy man a blustering gale is pleasant, for it brings pure air, stirs the blood, and fills every muscle with a delicious glow. Still, one may have too much of a good thing, and as we made our way down Stretford Road that

night we were both glad to button our greatcoats up to the chin. Turning down a side street, at length we reached our destination, a small, low building, with a red lamp over the door, and the words in big capitals—COUNTY POLICE. As a rule I go past police-stations, assize courts, and gaols without the least desire to make their acquaintance. On this occasion, however, an officer of the law, duly striped on the arm and lettered on the collar, met my friend with a smiling salute, and we went gladly in where so many enter quakingly against their will. Passing through the police-court, across a kind of stable-yard, we saw in front a long, narrow shed, alive with glaring gas and the hum of many voices. We entered, and found a rude but roomy apartment furnished with rows of rough-hewn benches and tables. On each table were numerous basins, and beside every basin a spoon and a hunch of bread. In a cloud of savoury steam at the far corner stood a cook with a ladle as big as a spade stirring a great copperful of soup, while a dozen helpers, mostly policemen in plain clothes, were busy in other ways. Our presence being observed, a ruddy, hearty-looking gentleman, about sixty years of age, came forward to welcome us. It was Mr. Superintendent Bent himself, a man as much loved by good folks and as much feared by bad people as any man can be. For thirty-four years he has been a member of the Lancashire police force; first as constable, then as sergeant, next as inspector, and now as superintendent, rising year after year by his own merits to the top of his profession.

It was in the early winter of 1878 that Mr. and Mrs. Bent, pitying the poor hungry street waifs, began to give them basins of soup. Their own children had grown up, but in this way they quickly found another and a very large family. Night after night hundreds of starving boys and girls came bareheaded and barefooted in the snow begging a share. The kind superintendent could not resist their pleading voices. Expenses became heavy. The crowds of hungry babies grew more pressing. Already he had spent more than he could afford, yet he could not bear to leave off, and he was sorely troubled. But God, from whom all kind thoughts come, who loves little children, and had put it into the heart of Mr. Bent to do them good, now sent assistance. Mr. Joseph Armstrong, a gentleman who had seen something of the good work, but was not known to our superintendent, wrote a letter to the newspapers with an account of it. Rich men sent money. Ladies brought shoes and stockings and garments. Other friends with less money, but equally kind hearts, offered their time, and the soup kitchen was thrown open to all comers. The originator of the charity has never asked for help; each winter more than enough has been sent.

After we had shaken hands with Mr. Bent we asked to be introduced

to his big family of little people. I have seen many a gathering of children, but never one like this. Crossing the shed, and making our way between some tarpaulin sheets, which on this side hung from the roof so as to make a kind of fourth wall, we found ourselves in a big, square asphalted yard. It was very dark, but by the bull's-eye lantern of the policeman who now accompanied us we could see huddled together on three sides of the court the shivering forms of some hundreds of half-naked children. Many did not appear to be more than four or five years old. Others informed us that they had "turned fifteen," though their dwarfish stature seemed to impugn the assurance. Some lived in the neighbourhood; some had come from Chorlton, Gorton, and even Pendleton townships, two or three miles distant. None were sufficiently clad. Fragments of dress originally made for adults, hanging loosely about infantine shapes, gave to many a painfully bizarre appearance. Shoes and stockings were rare. Not a few had only one wretched skirt to defend them from the stinging night air. One timid little girl, whom we were moved to question by the sight of tears coursing silently down her thin cheeks, told us that she had no father, that mother was ill, that neither mother nor herself had had anything to eat all day. She was crying, she said, because she was "clemmed," and her white face, hungry eyes, and naked limbs, blue with cold, were vouchers for the truth of her story. Poor little maid! she was only one of many in like pitiful case. One of Mr. Bent's rules is that his pensioners must eat their soup and bread before going away, for there is reason to fear that otherwise it would find its way down the throats of unnatural parents. As the cone of light from the "bull's-eye" moved over the crouching forms of the children, a boy was detected carrying a jug. He was called out, and asked what the jug was for. "Eh, dear o'me," he cried out, in terror and conscious guilt, "aw's be ta'en up! Whatever mun aw do? Aw'm after nought wrang, maister. Aw am not, fur sure. Feyther 's sick in bed, an' he code eawt fur a bit o' summat to height. An' mother sits bith' bedside tentin' him an' cryin' 'er e'en up becose hoo ha' not a saup o' broth i' th' heause. Aw says 'Aw'll gi' tho my own, dad!' an' aw coomd wi' th' owd pitcher a puppuss. Aw ha' not towd you a wort ov a lie, maister! Aw ha' not, aw tell yo! Aw'll ston to what aw've said. Ax yon chaps! They know mo. Eh, maister, aw'll never do't no moor, i' tho'll let me off!" I could not see the policeman's face in the darkness, but he lifted the hand that carried the lantern to wipe something away before he asked again, "What have you had to eat to-day?" "We'n han nobbut a bit o' brade an' a twothre potitos. Maister, lemme goo! Aw want to go whoam." Poor little shockheaded culprit, in trouble for wanting with an empty stomach to give his own

supper to a sick father! How do you suppose the policeman punished him? With a hot supper, a jugful of stocky soup, a comfortable new coat, and a pair of clogs!

By this time supper was waiting. The children filed into the shed. At a signal all sang "Be present at our table, Lord," finishing with the quickest "Amen" I ever heard, and then in an instant they were busy with their pints of soup. While grace was being sung I had noticed that many were clasping their basins with both hands for the sake of its genial warmth, and had almost wished the food were not so hot, fearing lest some ravenous child might be scalded. They had no fear. A few crumbled their bread into the thick savoury mess. The majority, however, lifted the almost boiling soup to their mouths, and with incredible rapidity drank it off. Many polished their basins after the fashion of Jack Sprat with his platter. Others more decorously scoured them with bread. Almost all lingered over the crust, as if they wanted both to eat and to have it. Then with a look upon their perspiring faces of deep content, with an awkward attempt at a bow or a curtsey, with a whispered "Aw've a good way to goo, maister," or some other apology for hasty exit, they left the premises. A second group followed, and a third, and a fourth, every child illustrating the schoolboy definition of appetite, "*'Appy* while you're eating and *tite* when you've done," until by the time the last was satisfied fifteen hundred had been fed. Every night all through the winter months these suppers are given away. In addition, to the poorest and worst clad Mr. Bent supplies caps and hoods, jackets and frocks, stout under-clothing, and capital clogs or wooden shoes. The policemen cheerfully give their services, working hard for the children in time snatched from their own sleep, and looking so happy over it all that I was forcibly reminded of the words, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

W. J. Woods.

WITH THE YOUNG IN FOREIGN PARTS.

Mission Schools, Paris.

Not long ago, in a very happy, expectant state of mind, I started on a three months' tour to Bible lands. I had in my pocket letters of introduction to about a dozen Mission Schools in Palestine and Syria. Having been for over forty years actively engaged in Sunday and Ragged Schools in my own neighbourhood, I had a strong desire to see for myself what was being done for the young abroad. In less than nine hours after leaving London by way of Folkestone and Boulogne I arrived

at Paris. I preceded the party (of about twenty) which I had to join by several days, so that I might have time to witness what an earnest Christian friend and former minister in Manchester, Rev. R. N. M'Call, was doing amongst the neglected ones of gay Roman Catholic Paris. That devoted servant of Christ years before, when there on his way to a health resort, determined to try if he could do any good amongst the then execrated class which had recently set the city on fire. Accompanied by his excellent wife, who felt the same interest, he found his way to the low quarter of Belleville, and was delighted to find that the tracts he gave and remarks he made were well received. Those who gathered round them begged they would come again next day, which they consented to, and also, as desired, a room was soon taken for their Gospel addresses. The interest grew, other places in succession were opened, Mr. and Mrs. M'Call continuing with them, and being much cheered with the evident tokens of God's blessing on the work. At that time the Mission included 35 places, with sitting accommodation for 6,650. The Ragged Schools and Children's Services are an important feature of the work. Well I remember, in trying on the Sunday afternoon to discover one of the places of meeting, the policemen and passers-by whom I asked not able or not willing to inform me, I was led to it by the sound of a well-known hymn then being sung. Entering the room, I found about 200 boys and girls heartily joining in (in French) "Safe in the Arms of Jesus," and who were very attentive as the conductor spoke to them of a "Saviour's Love." What a contrast this spectacle presented to that I had just seen—thousands of adults in the public promenade being entertained by the many Punch and Judy shows, miniature theatres, &c., and the round-about swings; work going on, shops open much as on week-days. The theatres on Sabbath evening, I was informed, were more crowded than at any other time. That night I chose to visit one of Mr. M'Call's schools, situated in the low neighbourhood of St. Antoine. The streets were busy, and the wine-shops full of customers, not a few of whom were women. I thought what about the children of such parents. Entering Mr. M'Call's schoolroom, a plain but commodious building, I found about 300 lads and girls assembled, their clothing and rough appearance generally indicating the destitute class to which they belonged. The superintendent, a young Scotchman, readily obtained order. The Sankey hymns were moderately well sung, and during prayer attention and proper behaviour were pretty general.

One of the officials, in asking me to give the address, made the good suggestion to let it be of an illustrative character, remarking that when on a former occasion the speaker was somewhat prosy a lad

called out if the man would get down he could do better, as he had a pretty tale that would please the scholars. I narrated the story of the English youth who, though the penalty for going to the Protestant school was a severe application of a stick to his back by the father, persisted in going, so great was the hold the loving lady teacher had got over him, and whom she had first picked up in the streets. The condition that he, the son, got his parent at length to agree to—to give him the whipping before going, so that he might not have to think about it at school—much interested my hearers, especially his early sudden death by accident, when in his last few moments he desired the doctor who had been called in to send word to his teacher and his father that though he was dying he was happy, as he was going to Jesus in heaven.

One of the female scholars in coming to the school had her leg broken, and seeing it was an hospital case, her teacher, in parting with her, gave her a New Testament, pointing out the verse, "God so loved," &c., suggesting that with her pencil, in lieu of the word "whosoever," "C. M." (her Christian name) was to be written. Shortly after a Scripture reader in passing through the wards of the place, noticing a little girl with a book open before her, found it was at this passage thus altered, and she not afraid of death, as she had believed in her Saviour.

My friend told me of a dear lad presenting himself one week evening, as their service was about to commence, quietly, but feelingly, desiring they would accept of the present for the room he had brought (a large bouquet of flowers, value 15s.), as that evening was his birthday, for just a year ago he had been "born again" in that room.

Other features of Mr. M'Call's work should be noticed, but I can only just mention them here. During the last year (including places beyond Paris, exclusive of Marseilles district) the Sunday School Children and Adult Services, Young Women's Classes, &c., were held 10,591 times, with a total attendance of 717,223, an increase over former year of 75,000, and 12,551 domiciliary visits were paid. The number of Scriptures, books, tracts, &c., circulated was 227,252. Total expenditure £9,131 0s. 1d.

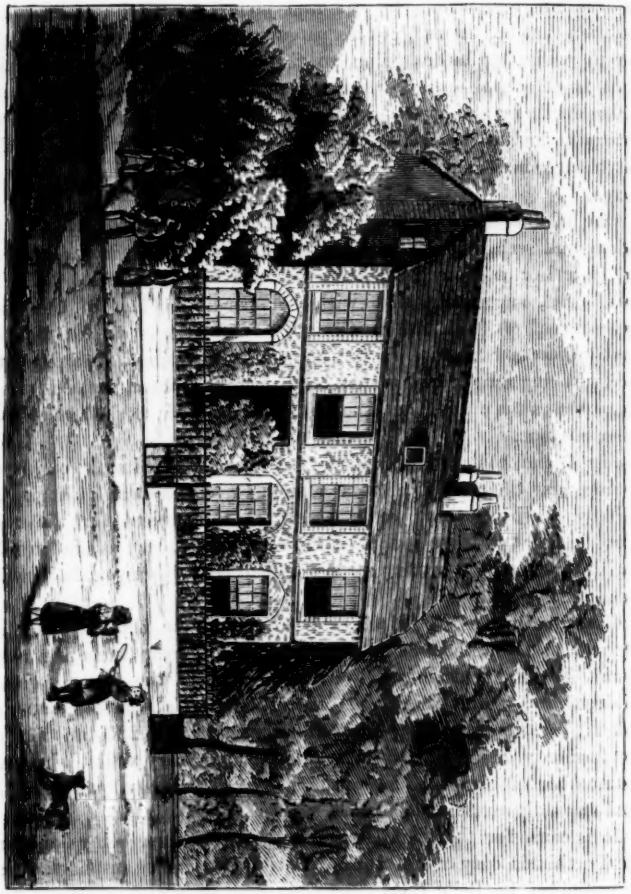
It is cause for thankfulness that so much is thus being done, and, happily, this is only one of several Christian agencies sustained in the gay capital of La Belle France for the reclamation and salvation of the poor.

J. SUGDEN.

LATYMER ROAD MISSION.

Established 1862.

THE Children's Convalescent or Sea Side Home, Broadwater, near Worthing (in connection with the Latymer Road Mission), was opened



for the reception of poor London children needing a change, on the 27th May, 1882. Since that date about 80 poor girls and boys have paid visits to the Home from a fortnight to three months in length, and all

have greatly benefited by the change. Little cripples, children with heart disease, consumptive children, girls with weak eyes, little boys suffering from rickets, many starved boys and girls, one little fellow suffering from infantile paralysis, a little girl suffering from disease of the spine, one boy very ill with a bad burn, have been amongst the number.

A pleasing feature in connection with the Home is the fact that it has been largely supported by the collections of children in a better position of life than the class for whom it is intended. The committee are greatly troubled by the want of regular annual subscribers; at the present moment the amount promised annually is less than ten pounds. Collecting cards may be had on application. Subscriptions and donations, which are much needed, may be sent to Mr. Aulay Macaulay, hon. secretary, at the Mission, Notting Hill.

HOLIDAY HOUSE.

THE Ragged School Union has annually asked for help towards that day long looked for by the children, viz., a "day in the country." Sometimes, alas! it has proved to be a wet day, always a hurried, noisy one, with its too lengthy journey through the suburbs, and few indeed are the hours of enjoyment in the country. Some of our readers who expect their annual relaxation far from dusty towns, in really rural scenes, must regret that our young citizens cannot share their joys. During the past few years, however, a step in advance has been made, and following the lead of a German custom, some of our wee Londoners have been fortunate enough to receive invitations to spend a whole "week in the country."

On the 14th January, 1878, the following letter appeared in a London newspaper:

"A HOLIDAY SCHEME.

"*To the Editor of the 'Morning Post.'*

"SIR,—On behalf of several hundred pale, nervous, warm-hearted London children, I write to thank you for printing on your pages, and the Countess Edmond Batthyány for detailing, this glorious scheme we have so often dreamt of, viz., a week in the country for such as we. There are many within an easy distance of London with all the will and power to let the crumbs of their sweet country homes fall upon the lives of neglected boys and girls, then let them (sparing a little time and money from their many sports, their prize flowers and animals), 'do it, do it, do it,' as we sing at school. Don't invite too many of us, don't prepare too much, for our wants are few, and with the attractions

of farm and field and country woods, we shall only run home to eat and sleep. If you have no vacant cottage, a barn or coachhouse with very common beds will do for us. Bread-and-butter, with deliciously fresh milk, will be a treat for breakfast and tea, while dinner need not cost more than 3d. a head. The washing of sheets and towels, and the wages of a kindly woman, will, with our railway-ticket, be the whole cost of a never-to-be-forgotten week. Most of us have spent a hurried day amidst noise and crowds at Petersham or Epping Forest, but we never saw a 'real live' sunset nor a rainbow. We don't know what country stillness is, nor the wondrous roar of thunder, and half of what our teacher tells we do not understand; and when he reads of seed-time and harvest, clouds and sky, and many other things which seem to give him cause for pleasure, and make his wearied eye sparkle, we often fall asleep. Some of us consider the outside of a public-house the brightest spot in the world. If you have better in the country, for God's sake let us see it and know it before we begin the treadmill of town toil.

"If you, kind readers, will do your part in this grand scheme, commence preparations now, and many human hearts will long remember how you at least bridged that great gulf between us, bringing light and love, and health and happiness, to many a little wanderer in dark London.

"There are many waiting for your lead in this good work. Then start to-day, that they may follow.—I am, your obedient servant,

"A Poor Boy."

The Countess had detailed how she received a few strangers at her country seat, and surely there are many country homes who will enjoy their plenty all the more richly if, through the hot summer, they will share their superfluities with some weary little Londoners.

In consequence of this appeal some of our friends opened a cottage in May, 1878, in a genuine country district, furnished it for £45, and during the past five summers, at a cost of about £100 per annum, they have welcomed 1,500 of their scholars for a week's rest, and 300 other young friends for shorter periods, and all without a hitch in the routine. To this outlay must be added a payment to the matron, but if Holiday House can find a true mother for the work what a valuable addition to the Mission School, and what a week of opportunity is afforded for lasting impressions of God's goodness amid the peaceful scenes so fascinating to her visitors.

For town-bred children, ignorant of God's great handiwork, a week of the country is one succession of joys. The start, the train, the tramp across country, the cottage home, the tea, the garden, the swing, the village street, its sweety shop, the country folk, the fields and farms,

the singing of birds, the hum of insect life, the fading light, the family prayer, the calm of night, the bright morning waking, the wood excursions, God's Acre and the rustic church—yes, even the return to dust and heat, laden with precious memories and a few flowers—all experiences so familiar to the reader can only be secured for our young people at Holiday House. Now is the time to prepare for the coming season, and as the writer needs such a home, may he ask any reader who can help to send him the address of a cottage about twenty miles from London on the South-Eastern or North-Western Railways, rent about £30, at least six rooms, some ground, and not more than one and a half miles from a station?

March, 1883. J. E. G.

REAPING.

"Be not weary in well doing, for in good season ye shall reap, if ye faint not." Some results of an encouraging character are continually cropping up.

Lambeth Ragged Schools.—One of the teachers was recently passing through one of our main thoroughfares when his wife, who accompanied him, accidentally dropped her purse, and passed on without knowledge of her loss. A rough lad who was close at hand picked up the purse, and following, restored it to the owner. In course of the conversation which followed it was elicited from the boy that he attended the Lambeth Ragged Schools, and may be it was there that the principles of honesty which were on that occasion manifested were first instilled into his youthful mind.

One Tun.—The master relates that a boy was sent by his teacher to get some books; seeing a pair of compasses and other things lying on a table, he was tempted to put them into his pocket. They were missed and inquired for. An appeal was made to the whole school, advising the guilty one to restore them to the teacher. Twelve o'clock came round, and the boys were dismissed. Upon their return at 2 o'clock a lad with his mother came to the door, wishing for a private interview. Presenting a small parcel, she stated how very unhappy her boy had been since the theft, and being much affected, too, by the morning's appeal, begged her to come and bring back the things, while he with subdued feelings confessed to have taken them.

Mint Street.—In the Infant Class the aunt of one of the little ones was dangerously ill in the hospital. On Sunday the little girl came and asked her teacher to pray to God to make her aunt better. A

prayer meeting was held with the children; God honoured the faith of the little one.

Walker Street.—A converted child was the means of bringing her parents to an improved life.

Richmond Street, Walworth.—One Sunday evening there entered a Ragged School in Walworth a poorly clad, thin, and pale-faced boy, with rough hair and unwashed face. His appearance excited the sympathy of a very warmhearted young teacher, who forthwith took him under his care, and sought to lead him to the Saviour's feet. By prayer and faith, as well as by earnest endeavour, he succeeded in winning his love to Jesus, and the boy being of a somewhat simple turn of mind believed implicitly in his teacher's counsel, and was not so easily led astray by the temptations into which boys of brighter intelligence so often fall. For a time all went well, but the teacher, by change of circumstances, was compelled to relinquish his class for some few months, and in this interval Dickie was lost sight of. On the teacher's return, however, he met him casually in the street, and invited him back again to the school and class. He came readily, but only for a short time, for soon after he was laid aside by that dread disease consumption, without hope of cure. He was visited by the teacher and the officers of the school, to whom he related his love for the Lord, and his simple trust in the blood of Christ.

One evening he was visited, and was sitting up by the side of a bright fire, his poor thin hands being quite discoloured from the heat of the fire, and his poor white, emaciated face presenting a striking contrast to them, and he was asked:

"Are you afraid to die, Dickie?"

"No," said he.

"Why not?"

"Because I am only waiting for Jesus to come and take me home," was the reply.

"You are in great pain sometimes, Dickie; can you bear it patiently?"

"Oh, yes," said he, "for when my head is bad, and my cough comes on, I speak to Jesus, and ask him to relieve me, and then I get better."

THE DWELLING-PLACES OF "THE POOR."

"Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, and shall not be heard."

A FEW weeks ago two admirable articles appeared in the *Daily News*, headed "Home, Sweet Home" and "Packing in the Poor," evidently written by an eye-witness of the scenes he described. Whether he had visited

the Pye Street district I know not; but the description of the houses falling into decay, doors without locks—nay, houses without any entrance doors at all—dilapidated staircases, holes in the ceilings caused by the leg of a bedstead breaking through the worm-eaten floor in the room above, water tanks so decayed that they could not hold water, which had to be preserved in any vessels that could be spared; sewers, none!—was a perfect description of a large area in Westminster during the past quarter of a century. The cause of this fearful state of affairs is found in the simple fact that the owners of the property do not appear, the houses being underlet to men who grind the faces of the poor, extracting from them large rents, but not spending one penny on needful repairs.

And what are the occupations of those who are compelled to live in these miserable abodes? In addition to the industrial class, such as costermongers, hawkers, umbrella and chair menders, grinders, flower-makers, &c., &c., there is a small army of poor women, many of them widows with families, who earn their living by "charing" or by their needle. Everybody knows something of the pay of the shirtmakers, and even those who work at the Army and Navy Stores cannot earn more than ten or twelve shillings a week. Again, there are many thousands of labourers—poor patient fellows! so often out of work, as during the past season, through stagnation of trade, perhaps twenty weeks together, walking fifteen and twenty miles in search of "a job," and sometimes, where "one hand" is wanted, joining in the desperate struggle to be the fortunate one engaged to earn the eighteen shillings a week wherewith to provide food for the destitute wife and family at home.

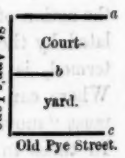
Now, consider all ye that dwell securely, what must be the effect of the action of the Board of Works when a whole district, thickly populated by these respectable, not "degraded," poor, as they are generally termed, is to be swept away, and they are left positively houseless. Where can they go? for they must not remain in the streets. They must "move on," but where? Certainly not into the Peabody Buildings. In those in Old Pye Street, for instance (for I can only speak of the district with which I well acquainted), the first rule is that the tenant must guarantee that he or she is earning from 21s. to 25s. weekly *all the year round*. Who can do that but well-paid officials or artisans? I see in the last Peabody Report that the average weekly earnings of each head of family is nearly 24s.

It was at the time of such a raid, about eighteen years ago, when an exceeding bitter cry went up from the evicted ones—and one woman, who with many relations had lived fifty years in Old Pye Street, exclaimed,

"They have taken away our homes, why don't they dig a big hole and bury us, and so get rid of us altogether?"—that I, after having vainly appealed to one of the Peabody trustees, ventured on what was then considered a most hazardous experiment—the building a dwelling-house exclusively for the very poor, as it was a fixed opinion that this class *would* not pay their rents, and *preferred* dirt and discomfort to cleanliness and order. The result of nearly seventeen years' experience is most satisfactory, and has proved that the poor will pay their rents honestly—if within their means, be it understood—and live decently.

A piece of vacant ground in St. Ann's Lane, freehold, used for beating carpets—a great nuisance—and two old houses in Old Pye Street, were secured through the kindness of the late Marquis of Westminster, who promised to advance, on mortgage at three per cent., as much money as might be required, which was £7,500. I could not guarantee more than three per cent. at moderate rents. This was the more generous as it was not on his lordship's estate; but he had frequently visited the Ragged Schools in Perkin's Rents, the Duck Lane Poor Men's Club, and other efforts of the One Tun Mission, and was persuaded that the great want was comfortable dwellings.

Westminster Buildings was opened July, 1866. It is a plain, substantial five-storeyed building, fireproof. Every living-room is fitted with cottage stove, oven, and boiler, and every bedroom with a fireplace, which is not always the case in Peabody Buildings. There are 110 rooms, occupied by sixty-one families, in one, two, or three tenements, the rents ranging from 1s. 9d. for a single room, 3s. for two rooms, and and 4s. 3d. for three rooms. The washhouse is on the top of the building, fitted with eight coppers and troughs, so that several women can wash at the same time.



The building is shaped thus. *a* is a block of single rooms; in *c* are located the One Tun Ragged, Day, Night, and Sunday Schools, the Working Lads' Institute, and all the varied Mission work which was removed from Perkin's Rents when the old school-house, formerly the One Tun public-house, and all the street was swept away in 1880. *b* is the staircase running up the outside of the building opening on to galleries, so that each tenement is entered from the gallery, rendering the rooms well ventilated and healthy, and, by Divine blessing, singularly free from epidemics. Last year there was only *one* death, that of an aged woman nearly eighty years of age; the year before, not one. The children can play on the galleries safely under the mother's eye, and are thus kept from much of the evil surroundings of the streets. On one gallery there are at present nineteen children, many

of them born in the buildings. All the galleries have an unlimited supply of water; there are also dust shafts and sanitary appliances.

The rents pay all expenses, including a dividend of three per cent., rates, taxes, and repairs, gas, water, and superintendent's salary, leaving a small balance, which accumulates to meet any heavy expenditure. The builder's account for painting, March, 1881, was £74 18s.

I must add that the wholesale demolition of the dwellings of the poor tends to demoralise the community wherever it may occur. When a family of six or eight persons are *compelled* to live in one room—and remember that it *is compulsory*—for which they have to pay more than they do for two nice ones in Westminster Buildings, the children must be sent out to play in the streets, bad habits are acquired, they become rude, disobedient to parents, truants from school, and adopt the street manners, which soon convert them into "rowdies" and "roughs." Alas, poor parents! they can but cry unto the Lord. Shall their cry be in vain?

H. M. Eyton, Esq., Lower Brook Street, Ipswich, was the architect of Westminster Buildings. The superintendent from the beginning, Mr. Cove, will gladly give further information to any visitors.

ADELINE BARKER HARRISON,
Trustee.

March 5, 1883.

JOHN LEYLAND.

THE course of time brings many changes in the annals of a locality as well as in the life of the individual; and we can well imagine (what was really the case) that the building, a sketch of which is given on the next page, presented a somewhat different appearance forty years ago from that depicted most faithfully by our artist at the present time. In truth, Lambeth was in time past a most aristocratic locality, and the house which is situated immediately opposite the Archbishop's Palace was a fair specimen of comparatively ancient buildings. Standing now alone, in a somewhat advanced stage of dilapidation, and only kept from imminent destruction by the aid of substantial supports, few passers-by, or even inhabitants for that matter, know the history that its records tell. Here, week by week, was proclaimed from the pulpit of the grand old Bedford tinker the glad tidings of great joy to many who were strangers and pilgrims in the downward path; here, too, from week to week, were set forth the evils of intemperance, and strenuous efforts made in the reclamation of the poor drunkard from the thraldom of his vice (for Mr. Leyland was a staunch teetotaler); and here arose the first dawning of the Lambeth Ragged School.

ONDER STANDARD

One of the chief workers in each of these labours of love was Mr. John Leyland and his worthy partner. Nothing but a love, deep and pure, towards the poverty-stricken and sin-stained could have induced the efforts made by this good couple, and sustained them in their work. While teaching to the children day by day the elements of knowledge it pressed upon them that when the hours of school were over their charges went direct into the temptations which exist only in city life; some of the children almost entirely destitute, with no parents, and in some cases with worse than none! "Can nothing be done for them?" was the question, and the practical response soon followed. Plain substantial food was supplied to the most needy, and sleeping accommodation was provided for the most destitute. Nor were the children the only recipients of this good man's assistance—many a young woman who, more sinned against than sinning, had wandered from the path of rectitude, has had cause to bless the day she met with Mr. and Mrs. Leyland. We remember one case very distinctly. A young lady, the daughter of a country clergyman, had been led astray under the promise of marriage, was brought to London, and there deserted; nothing but the streets was left to her. She met with Mrs. Leyland, and was taken to her home and cared for as a daughter. For months not a word as to her antecedents or family connections could be elicited. "No!" she said, "her parents had mourned her as dead, and it were better so." But after a time the love of home and parents broke through, and she revealed her true name and parentage. Letters of reconciliation were written, and the poor lost prodigal restored to her parents' home and heart. This is only one of many similar cases.

Soon after he took the pledge, forty or more years since, he saw a man "drunk and incapable." He laid hold of his arm, found out where he lived, and led him home, or rather to his hovel, for it was not worthy to be called *a home*. The poor wife was broken-hearted, and seemed to think it was useless to try to get a living, but Mr. Leyland inspired her with hope by a small gift and a promise to see her again. The promise was kept and oft repeated. He bought a basket, and set up the poor woman as a seller of watercresses. He continued his efforts till the man took the pledge, and he became a respectable member of society.

In connection with the infant school referred to was a large Sunday Ragged School of about 500 scholars. The latter, for want of space, was removed to a near railway arch. Great success attended the efforts, which were generously supported by influential persons of the locality, and worked out by a large band of voluntary teachers.

An event, however, occurred which, had he remained, would have involved a sacrifice of principle, so he left, and decided to go to Australia, not influenced by the gold-fields of that colony, for they had not then been discovered, and so decided was he that he secured berths for himself, wife, and child by paying a deposit. He then went to his friend Mr. Gent, of the Ragged School Union, to ask for letters of introduction. His friend, not liking the intended emigration, and knowing how great was the repugnance of his wife to the sea, asked him what he was going to do with Mrs. Leyland, to which he replied, "Do with her, why put her on my back and take her." Mr. Gent, seeing his determination, dropped the subject, and touched on that of refuges for neglected and destitute children, and related what he and his committee had been doing for such in Westminster, and the success that followed their efforts. Mr. Leyland was at once deeply interested, for he well knew the institution referred to, having been a candidate, a year before, for a post in it. Mr. Gent went on to say that he had been applied to by a lady for an estimate of the cost of an institution of a similar kind to the one in Westminster to be conducted in one of the suburbs of London, for fifty boys, as she intended, if practicable, to support it solely herself. The estimate had been furnished and approved, and the then position of affairs was that the lady was willing to begin as soon as suitable persons could be found to carry it on, and a request had been received to find these "suitable persons" and introduce them to the lady. Mr. Gent added that in his opinion the "suitable persons" were Mr. Leyland and his wife. Having thus expressed himself, Mr. Gent would accept no reply till Mr. Leyland and his wife had taken twenty-four hours to consider it. The next day Mr. Leyland again went to Mr. Gent's office, and while they were in conference, the lady (Miss Portal), without any pre-arrangement, entered the office to know what progress had been made in finding a superintendent. Mr. Gent told her that the person she saw in the office as she had passed through it was, in his judgment, a most suitable man, and his wife was equally suitable, but, unfortunately, he had decided upon going to Australia. The whole subject was being reconsidered, and the result would be communicated to her. That "result" was a willingness to abandon emigration if successful in obtaining the appointment. An interview with the lady was arranged, who fixed for another meeting to gain further personal details in the interim. She was fully satisfied, made the appointment, and commissioned Mr. Leyland to find suitable premises. The institution thus founded at Kentish Town in the spring of 1852, was carried on and extended from time to time till the lady's death; and such was her satisfaction with what had been

done, that she left to Mr. Leyland, besides other benefits, a very substantial legacy. But we are anticipating.

Miss Portal was not long discovering that she had an earnest and conscientious worker to assist her in carrying out her philanthropic labours. The house in which this initial effort was made was soon found too strait; the beds were all full, and still applicants for more continued to arrive. What was to be done? Miss Portal arose to the emergency, and instructed Mr. Leyland to seek more extensive premises, which after a considerable and careful search were found in Bridge House, situated on the River Wandle at Wandsworth. Possession was obtained in March, 1854, and various alterations carried out to render the institution efficient in every particular. For some four years longer the school continued to fulfil its beneficent career at the sole expense of its benevolent founder; but in the year 1858 it was thought that a much wider sphere of usefulness would be opened up by having the school certified as a Reformatory under the then recently passed Act of Parliament. Application was made, and a certificate obtained. And so the institution grew and continued to flourish with the blessing of the All-wise Benefactor resting upon it.

In 1867 the Magistrates for the County of Surrey discovered that the time had arrived for them to avail themselves of the Industrial Schools Act, and to either found a school or to make use of an existing one. They accordingly applied to Mr. Leyland, and after several consultations between the magistrates, the inspector, and Mr. Leyland, the latter consented, with the inspector's permission, to part off a portion of the Reformatory buildings to be used as an Industrial School under the Act of 1866. This arrangement was, of course, purely tentative, and a spacious and substantial erection was placed as soon as possible on what is acknowledged to be one of the best sites on Wandsworth Common. It was hoped to retain the Industrial School in its old quarters at Bridge House, but the formation of the Thames Embankment very seriously deteriorated the Industrial School property by flooding the greater portion of the premises at every high tide. Improvements to prevent these inundations could have been carried out, but as the lease had expired, and the tenure could only be continued upon an annual tenancy, it was deemed expedient to seek better and more convenient accommodation elsewhere. This was found at Byfleet, a village lying between Weybridge and Woking, on the London and South-Western Railway, and the Industrial School was removed thither in the year 1870.

From that time to the present the two institutions, under the one honorary management, have worked steadily on in the reclamation of the youthful criminal, and the training of the young whose previous

training had been all too much in the wrong direction, and "snatching them as brands from the burning," the Wandsworth Reformatory being under the superintendence of Mr. John Felton Newland, and the Surrey Industrial School at Byfleet with Mr. Alfred Wells as superintendent. We earnestly trust that some means will be devised to retain both schools on our list of Reformatory and Preventive Institutions, which there is little doubt will be done.

The people among whom Mr. Leyland had worshipped needed a new and enlarged house of God, to accomplish which Mr. Leyland not only gave freely from his own resources, but volunteered his services to superintend the erection as clerk of the works. He had had some considerable experience in building operations, and could therefore usefully hold such a post. He thus secured for the trustees, not only the full value for their money, both in quality and quantity, but economised their funds by filling this post without remuneration till the building was completely finished. When he removed to Byfleet he found the chapel accommodation in the village very meagre, and set to work, with others, and was the principal means of a new and commodious place of worship being provided for the villagers. His granddaughter laid one of the foundation stones, through whom substantial aid of a monetary kind was given.

Mr. Leyland was eminently a worker and not a talker. He was one of those men who, if he wanted a thing done, did it. In early life few have passed through greater troubles and trials than he. He was therefore the better able in after years to "succour them that are tempted." He never spared himself to make effective his schemes for promoting the welfare of his boys, or in correcting their uncouth manners and evil tendencies. Many years since, when his institution was in Kentish Town, he was met in Camden Town late at night coming away from home, and walking very fast in the middle of the road; he was accosted by a friend who asked where he was going, when he replied, "Oh, somewhere in the middle of Kent." "What! middle of Kent at this time of night; why, what's up?" "Oh, one of my boys has run away, and I think I shall catch him on the other side of Gravesend; I'm not going to be done by him." "But how can you get there? the last train has gone." "That does not matter, my legs are good for twenty or thirty miles; good-night," and away he went. He reached his destination, and at once began to make inquiry of police and all other likely persons, but without any success; nevertheless he felt sure he was on the right track, but had outstripped the lad in the race. He sought a position where he could both rest and watch for the coming of his *protégé*. By the afternoon he was refreshed, and in a little while saw in the distance a youth

limping along the road, and when he came opposite the house Mr. Leyland stepped out, and asked the poor lad if he was tired, and if he would come in and have some bread and cheese, and water to wash it down. The wretched boy was dumbfounded to see his master there, and, too footsore to run, he at once gave in, sobbing. Towards evening master and boy returned by train. The boy never after regretted being thus out-manœuvred. When the institution was at Wandsworth another lad escaped, but had not been gone long when the master was made aware of it, and immediately started off in pursuit. The lad soon found he was being followed, and knew that on the main road he would be overtaken; he therefore turned into a by-lane that led only to the river, but the land was open one way with the exception of a broad ditch with deep mud at low water. Across this he determined to risk all, and make his escape, concluding the master, now in sight, would not follow through such a slough of despond. But he was mistaken, for as soon as Mr. Leyland came to the ditch in he went without the least hesitation till the mud was up to the thighs, and on reaching the other side the chase was carried on till the runaway was fairly run down. They could have returned by another way, but to teach the lad a lesson the way back must be by the same way first chosen by the boy. On reaching the ditch it was seen that the tide was beginning to flow into it, and the boy hesitated to go across. It was no use to object, in they went, and when midway Mr. Leyland, who held the youth by the back of his collar, asked how he liked it, and gave a jerk as though to give him an extra ducking, this caused a cry of terror, which, from such a daring, obstreperous creature, was not undesirable. The plunge a second time into the horrid filth, against his inclination, was in itself a severe punishment, and found to be sufficient to deter from a repetition of the offence.

The same trait in our friend's character was strongly manifested upon the occasion of a fire which occurred at the Reformatory in April, 1870. Mr. Leyland had recently removed with a few of the boys to Byfleet, and late at night received the tidings that the workshops and outbuildings with machinery and tools at Wandsworth had been that afternoon completely destroyed by fire. Being assured that no lives were lost, although he knew the loss to him would exceed £3,000, and not a penny was insured, he said "Never mind, the buildings were never all we wanted for workshops, we can now build a more complete and suitable range." He came to town by the night mail, and early on the following morning large gangs of workers were set to remove the *débris* and dig out the foundations for the new erections. We place these instances on record simply as *specimens* of self-denial, and what is often called pluck, exercised by our departed

friend in the discharge of his early duties; and it was such self-denial and "pluck" exercised by him and others of the early workers that has made the Reformatory movement a success.

Many instances of great kindness of heart and munificent liberality might be mentioned; we quote the following as a sample:—

On one occasion he found that the dairyman who supplied his institution with milk had lost all his cows by an epidemic. He at once inquired into the details, and began to think over what could be done to meet such a case. He was not satisfied with his own liberal contribution, but went to all the well-to-do people in and around the locality, and thus personally pleaded the poor man's cause, and so successfully, that he obtained enough to put the poor dairyman upon his feet again, and with a prospect of his recovering his lost position.

But while God's work continues, and its operations enlarge, the workers drop off one by one, and are gathered to their reward. Our friend for nearly two years past had been suffering from the insidious ravages of dropsy and heart disease; it was well known that human help was unavailing, and that the race was well-nigh run. We had every reason to know that he had long before "set his house in order," and that when, on the 7th of October, he gently breathed his last, it was only to "shuffle off this mortal coil" to exchange it for the robes of the saints in light.

In Memoriam.

MR. ANDREW PROVAN.

This well-known Ragged School worker passed away to his rest on Wednesday, February 7th, after a short illness, having attained his seventy-third year.

His beneficent ministry varied from time to time as City Missionary, Scripture Reader, and Ragged School Teacher. He laboured in London at Field Lane, Haverstock Hill, and Caledonian Road; also at Glasgow and Southampton.

He laid the foundation-stone of the Field Lane Institution by the establishment of a Sunday Night School. This, indeed, was the seminal principle of Ragged School work. The wretched district in

which the work commenced was largely inhabited by the vicious and criminal classes. In those days especially, the work was no child's play. It was at Field Lane that the work amongst waifs and strays received the appropriate designation of "Ragged."

His labours at Field Lane brought him under the special observation of Charles Dickens and George Cruikshank. In an interior of this institution, sketched by the great artist of humble life, Mr. Provan and his future wife are represented.

At Field Lane, Glasgow, Southampton, and Haverstock Hill his work was chiefly amongst children; and arduous indeed it must have been when we consider that in addition to Day School he had the Week Evening and Sunday Evening Schools also to superintend, and frequently was almost single-handed. It was through him that Mr. Starey, one of the founders of the Ragged School Union, and one of the earliest members of the Field Lane Committee, was brought into the work.

He succeeded in winning the affection of the children and the confidence of his committees. Testimonials were presented to him at Glasgow, Southampton, and elsewhere. The gifts of books presented were purchased on each occasion with the pence of the children who loved him.

He was at Haverstock Hill for some sixteen years. When the Ragged School building was appropriated for Infant National School purposes his services were discontinued, and a very useful work was brought to an abrupt termination. Subsequent to this he obtained some fitful employment as a Scripture Reader, which work he efficiently discharged.

For some few years he had no remunerative employment, and was dependent on the scanty earnings of his wife, who in very early and in some later days was a most conscientious worker in the Ragged School cause.

It is pleasant to know that for the last few years of his life he was aided by a small pension from the Scottish Corporation, and also by a larger sum from the Worn-Out Teachers' Fund of this Society, so that his closing days were comfortably provided for.

This "Hero of Humble Life," as Charles Dickens styled him, was buried on Saturday, the 10th February, at Highgate Cemetery.

Notices of Books.

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY'S PUBLICATIONS.

Bogatzky's Golden Treasury for the Children of God, whose Treasury is in Heaven.

This is, as the title states, devotional and practical observations on select passages of Scripture for every day in the year. *Keep Thy Heart with All Diligence* is a golden text. This book will greatly aid those who desire to observe this important precept, and is also full of seasonable comfort to those who are tried and cast down. It is printed, moreover, in excellent type, and the daily portions are so small that persons whose time is the scantiest may read and carry away its sacred teachings.

The Longer Way Round for the Shortest, and other Sketches. The Queen of the May. Mrs. Woodruffe's Revenge. Cranstock, a Tale of American Frontier Life.

These books are very interesting, and for the most part beautifully illustrated. They are story books, giving vivid pictures of real life. These are samples of the pure literature so much desired, and for the production of which the Tract Society is entitled to the thanks of Christian people. "The Queen of the May," by Anne Beale, is a story elaborately and artistically told, and well suited for a gift-book for a girl.

Friendly Greetings. A Halfpenny Illustrated Weekly Serial.

The Committee of the Religious Tract Society have kindly arranged to supply this excellent serial at a cheap rate for Ragged School purposes. Already large quantities are acceptably distributed, and we cannot better express our commendation of its words than by urging all Schools and Missions to "try it"

Old Jonathan, the District and Parish Helper. (W. H. and L. Collingridge, Aldersgate Street.) (Yearly volume.)

This book of bright pictures, pithy paragraphs, short stories, and pretty Bible lessons, deserves a wide circulation.

Drink and Strong Drink. By Dr. B. W. Richardson. (W. Collins and Sons.)

This is the first School Book written from the standpoint of total abstinence that we have seen. The name of the writer is a guarantee for clearness and ability.

Matthew Henry's Commentary. (Unabridged, in nine 3s. 6d. Monthly Parts.

Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton have done wisely in venturing upon a cheap re-issue of Matthew Henry. There is an unction and suggestiveness about the old divine which the Church Militant can ill afford to lose, notwithstanding the multitude of more recent Commentaries. The full text is given, the type is small but clear, and the get-up of the parts leaves little to be desired.

The Pioneer Boy, and how he became President. By the Author of "From Log Cabin to White House." Price 5s. (Hodder and Stoughton, Paternoster Row.)

The extensive sale of the work which traced the marvellous career of President Garfield was not only owing to the general admiration for the man, but also to the fascinating way in which the materials of so interesting a life were put together. The life-career of President Lincoln, which the Pioneer Boy depicts, was equally as romantic and his end as tragic. His public career was longer and much more distinguished than that of President Garfield. A book, therefore, which attracts the youthful mind to the study and emulation of a character so enterprising and virtuous as that of the great hero who fought victoriously the great battle of human freedom, is deserving of the widest circulation.

Sunshine. Edited by W. M. Whitemore, D.D. (George Stoneman, 67, Paternoster Row, E.C.)

This yearly volume, well illustrated and full of interesting and instructive matter, commends itself to all who care for pure and genial literature.

The Garden Farmer: Profitable Market Gardening. By William Earley. (Upcott Gill, 170, Strand, W.C.)

To all who are practically interested in the growth of vegetables we would recommend this book. It is a most concise and luminous treatise, comprising, in the space of 100 pages, all needful information.

Sacred Songs and Solos. Nos. 1 and 2 combined. Cloth boards, gilt edges. 4s. 6d.

This edition of the well-known hymn-book contains the music and words of 441 hymns, nicely bound, clearly printed, and altogether tasty, useful, and attractive. There are several smaller editions published, prices ranging from One Penny upwards. The price of these editions bring within the reach of all such a collection of hymns as leaves nothing to be desired.

CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES.

SEVERAL institutions, such as East Greenwich, King Edward, Sermon Lane, and others, give joints of meat and the materials for a pudding to deserving families. Others provide hot roast or baked dinners on the spot, and finish up with the Christmas tree always laden with fruit, despite of wind and weather. For size and costly gifts Brackley Street Tree bore the palm. Chequer Alley, Ogle Mews, Nelson Street, and St. Giles's Schools, were not lagging in this race. The Costers' Mission, under Mr. Orsman, gave an entire day—dinner, tea, articles of clothing, and an entertainment, conjoined to make a sunny time, and finished up with the magic lantern. Fox Court and Lamb and Flag gave three or four evenings to teas and entertainments. Dove Row was not behind in this labour of love. Nichol Street held almost a weekly celebration. In addition to creature comforts good music was provided, instrumental and vocal, and first-rate pictures lent a lustre to the lantern, and made the show truly magic. Besides this, grown-up shadows, shed by the teachers themselves in situations grotesque on the ample sheet, raised the fun to screaming point.

The girls and infants of Copperfield Road, Salmon's Lane, and Burdett Hall, had a united tea on the 6th February, and on the 8th the boys were similarly entertained. The entire number so catered for was about 2,300.

The Lambeth Ragged Schools, through the kindness of Mr. Hutchinson, of Brixton Road (a member of the Committee), gave in January, a sumptuous dinner of roast beef and plum-pudding to some 400 of the most needy of the children, and an entertainment afterwards. Some two or three we give in full below.

CHRISTMAS-DAY AT FIELD LANE REFUGES AND RAGGED SCHOOLS.

THE usual Christmas Dinner for the Destitute was given on Christmas-day at this institution to about 750 persons. The repast was served in three of the schoolrooms in the building (the large room providing accommodation for 480 of the guests). The rooms were all made cheerful and pretty with suitable decorations, and a large party of ladies and gentlemen assembled to assist at the entertainment. The men and women were seated at 29 tables (24 at every table), and a lady or gentleman was appointed to carve at each, and one or two friends acted as waiters. There was, of course, considerable bustle and some little excitement incident to such an occasion, but at the same time the best

of order prevailed amongst the poor people, who were evidently grateful for the kindness shown them. The guests began to assemble soon after 10 o'clock, and at 11 short services were commenced. Dinner, consisting of hot roast beef and plum-pudding, was served about 12.15. To this substantial fare justice was speedily done by those who had come together for that purpose, and by one o'clock the meal was ended. The following ladies and gentlemen were present amongst others: Mr. George Williams, Mr. Death, Mr. A. Davies, Col. Griffin, Mr. Soper, Mr. Sawell, Rev. Mr. and Miss Wood, Rev. E. J. Hytche, Dr. Mason, Mr. Percy Lush, Miss Greengrass, several members of the committee, and Mr. P. Platt, secretary. The provisions consisted of 640lb. of beef, 600lb. of plum-pudding, 7 sacks of potatoes, 120 quartern loaves, and about 700 oranges.

During the previous week the provisions for an equally good dinner were supplied to 505 poor but deserving families in the neighbourhood, attendants at the various meetings held at the institution. The entire expenses were defrayed by contributions specially contributed for the purpose.

Apart from this annual Christmas dinner, the numerous agencies of this old-established charity, presided over by the Earl of Shaftesbury, K.G., and maintained by voluntary contributions, include, in addition to Refuges and Ragged Schools, a Servants' Training Home, Boys' and Girls' Certified Industrial Homes, a Ragged Church, Mothers' Meeting, Penny Bank, and Bands of Hope. During the past year 484 men and women passed through the Refuges, and 253 girls and boys were maintained in the Homes. Employment was found for 202 men and women, and 60 boys and girls. The treasurer of the institution, who pleads earnestly for funds to carry on the work, is W. A. Bevan, Esq., 54, Lombard Street, E.C.

GRAY'S YARD RAGGED CHURCH AND SCHOOLS, JAMES STREET, MARYLEBONE.

This annual gathering has been always the occasion of great excitement in the neighbourhood, and this time (the thirteenth) it was probably greater than usual, owing to the fact that about 1,000 poor persons—as against 800 last year—were partakers of the breakfast. Grace was sung very heartily; after which there was a preliminary meal, consisting of coffee and two thick slices of bread-and-butter to each person. About 10 o'clock the meeting commenced, prayer being offered by Mr. F. A. Bevan, president of the institution, who occupied the chair. The platform was occupied by several clergymen, ministers, and other gentlemen. Earnest addresses were delivered, interspersed with singing.

Two sacred solos from Mr. Sankey's collection, viz., "Weary Wanderer," and "Come, thou Weary," were sung most pathetically by Miss Mary Davies, a professional vocalist, after which the so-called breakfast commenced, each person receiving a large 1 lb. meat-pie in a paper bag, coffee *ad libitum*, also a large lump of cake, the work being carried out with great regularity and dispatch by the voluntary workers in connection with the church and schools, under the direction of Mr. Fraser, Mr. Woods, and Mr. Edmunds. A thousand Scripture portions sent by Mr. John Morley were given away. In the afternoon 700 other poor persons were regaled, previous to a service in the evening.

Some 2,000 breakfasts were dispensed, and unsectarian instruction given, during the past year, and last winter 2,076 meals were given to the most destitute children in the locality, the big schoolroom being filled regularly every Tuesday evening, for ten weeks, with a crowd of the poorest children of all ages, the two mugs of thick soup and a piece of bread being pronounced very good. These meals are being repeated this winter.

CHRISTMAS TREE AT STEPHEN-THE-YEOMAN RAGGED SCHOOL.

THE school in Marigold Place showed a lively and pleasant scene on Tuesday evening. Outside by half-past four the passage between Marigold Street and Cherry Garden Street was blocked by an excited crowd of children and mothers; inside by half-past five the large room was packed with an eager throng of expectant little ones. From the centre of this throng rose two trees, one of which carried a head lofty enough to touch the ceiling. The branches of both groaned—though when one comes to think of it no branch in such joyful circumstances could be so disagreeable as to groan—under a load of such fruit as of old may have grown in the Gardens of Hesperides, or in those known of that interesting friend of our youth, the hero of the Wonderful Lamp. The good genii who had provided everything were the Hon. H. A. Lawrence and Mrs. Lawrence, who gave the finishing touch to the joy of the occasion by also personally superintending the feast. The business of the evening began with a tea, and such a tea! None of your half-a-pint-of-coloured-water-and-two-thin-slices-of-bread-and-butter-with-half-an-ounce-of-cake-to-follow-teas, but bread-and-butter and cake till you could eat no more—no, not though you were an alderman of London city. Under the genial influence of this feast a ruddy glow (rare visitant) came to pale cheeks, and smiles to lips where smiles are seldom seen. Satisfaction

ruled supreme, and contentment sat on each happy face, turned of course towards those marvellous trees, concerning which a rumour had gone round that the fruit was for general distribution. Then as by magic the trees were illuminated, and five hundred little hands clapped vigorously to greet the pretty candles which showed their shining lights from between the green fir branches. Silence again. Expectation afoot while Mr. Lawrence spoke a few kindly words. A hymn, followed by two recitations, capitally given by a little boy and a tiny girl. Then Mrs. Lawrence, a smile on her lips and a pair of scissors in her hand, approached the larger tree. Expectation stood on tiptoe. The rumour as to those gorgeous fruits—was it coming true?

Talk of the horn of plenty or the inexhaustible bottle! What were they compared to these trees? Sure there was no end to the wonderful and the beautiful and the amusing and the useful things which at Mrs. Lawrence's bidding came down from the boughs. A boy or a girl had but to express a wish for something, and lo! were it a doll or a box of toys, a picture or a musical instrument, a knife or scissors, anything almost which youtful mind could conceive, and in a moment it was in his or her hands. Nor was this all. The givers of the feast, remembering that the season was winter, and their little guests poor, and in most cases were very sparely clad, had brought with them bundles of warm garments. These also were now distributed amid universal rejoicing. Then the children, under the leadership of their excellent teacher, Miss Challis, who is to be warmly congratulated on the conduct of her charges, sang a song about "Baby Bye," and a dot of a girl recited in the clearest of infant trebles a little poem. After this, cracker bonbons having been distributed, the mirth and noise waxed so uproarious that a startled policeman walking his beat near by, suddenly thought of dynamite, and rushed off towards the school, heroically bent on arresting an incendiary or two. But this policeman, being a good fellow, only smiled when he beheld the young culprits, and went his way again as happy as you like.

At the request of Mr. Menzies, the superintendent, three hearty cheers were given for Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence.

Notices of Meetings.

BOARD SCHOOLS AND SUNDAY NIGHT SCHOOLS.

At a recent meeting of the London School Board the school management committee, in their report, recommended, "That in future no schools be let for Sunday evening use, and that the necessary legal notice (three months) be given to the persons who have now Sunday evening tenancies in Board Schools for the discontinuance of such tenancies." This was moved by the Rev. Mark Wilks, and was opposed by Mr. Whiteley and Drs. Gladstone and Wainwright. Sir E. Currie and others did not object to the former part of the resolution providing existing tenancies were not disturbed, and this view of the case commended itself to the majority of the members, for on a division a resolution was carried—"That *in future* no schools be let for Sunday evening services."

SERMON LANE, ISLINGTON.

The annual distribution of prizes to the children for regular attendance and good conduct at Sunday School took place on the 19th January, when about 300 children and teachers were present.

The Sunday School Choir, whose efficiency reflects great credit upon their teacher, Mr. A. J. White, enlivened the evening by singing a selection of pieces.

After a few introductory remarks from Mr. W. D. Lewis, the superintendent of the Evening School, the chairman, Mr. R. J. Curtis, of the Ragged School Union, addressed the children.

At the close of his short address he proceeded to distribute the prizes, which consisted of about 130 carefully selected books; and some small book or illuminated motto was given to every child, and the children on leaving had an ample supply of buns and oranges.

DOVE ROW, HACKNEY.

The first Industrial Exhibition in connection with Dove Row Sunday and Ragged Schools was held recently.

Although the number of exhibitors was only thirty-seven, considerable interest in it was evinced by the scholars and their parents, who crowded the rooms. The exhibits were exceptionally good. The judges appointed awarded seventeen prizes and six certificates.

The prizes and certificates were distributed by the Rev. W. Marshall at the Morley Hall.

WEST GREENWICH RAGGED SCHOOL.

A gymnasium has been added to the Working Lads' Institute. An old subscriber to the school, who takes a lively interest in the work, was so gratified with a visit paid one week evening that he gave twenty guineas towards the expense incurred in this new effort; and further to promote its usefulness, he has offered prizes for the best gymnast, the best swimmer, and the best lad—that is, for the one who shall obtain the suffrages of the greater number on account of general merit.

FALSTAFF YARD MISSION RAGGED SCHOOLS, KENT STREET, BOROUGH. —THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY.

After the children's tea the schoolroom was filled by their parents and friends.

Mr. W. Pantlin occupied the chair.

Mr J. Cook, the secretary, read the report, which stated, amongst other things, that fifteen of the elder scholars had become communicants during the year. The school had an attendance of 200 children. Nearly £20 were raised during the year, to which sum the teachers largely contributed. The expenditure was £24. The boys in the Night School received secular instruction combined with religious teaching.

Each child received on leaving a present from the Christmas tree, and those who had attended regularly were rewarded with books, work-boxes, writing-desks, &c.

Nearly 200 articles of warm clothing have been distributed among the most destitute, and 180 hot suppers to the boys who attend the Week Evening Schools.

The collection realised £5.

NELSON STREET MISSION.

A meeting of rough lads and young men was held recently at the Nelson Street Mission, Wyndham Road, Camberwell, under the presidency of Mr. J. Kirk, of the Ragged School Union, for the purpose of investigating the present state of the neighbourhood, and for considering measures to be taken with a view to counteracting the bad habits and increasing ignorance of the younger portion of the inhabitants. The gathering consisted purely of young working men, who, though of rough appearance, appeared deeply interested in the subject under discussion. In the earlier part of the evening tea was provided, after which Messrs. Kirk, Parker, and Colliver addressed the rough youths with much humour, pertinency, and tact, turning what was meant by several of these young jokers to be "a jolly lark" into a serious business. After some discussion the suggestion that there should be instituted a Night School and Working Men's Club, available only to those of sixteen years of age and over, met with hearty approval.

RAGGED SCHOOL, THREE COLT STREET, LIMEHOUSE.

The Band of Hope in connection with the above school held its first quarterly tea and entertainment on the 10th January. After the Band of Hope children had partaken of tea a number of other children of the school, with parents and friends, were admitted. Mrs. Donne and several other ladies and gentlemen were present. The rector, the Rev. W. Donne, presided. Temperance songs were sung and recitations given, after which the rector gave an interesting address, entitled "The Ladder of Life." A few more songs, and then—oh, joy!—a beautiful Christmas tree was stripped of its fruit and distributed amongst the members.

THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY AND THE BOYS' INSTITUTES.

In February the Earl of Shaftesbury presided in the evening at the general public meeting of the session 1882-3 of the Castle Lane Boys' In-

stitute, Westminster. The primary objects of the institution are the offering youths the opportunity of spending their evenings profitably, and the providing the means of educational progress and moral improvement. Originally the institution was an outcome of the Ragged School Union, and was started with financial assistance from that society. The charge made upon the members is only 8d. per month. This is the third year during which the work has been carried on, and considerable progress has been made. As many as 160 new members have joined the institute since October last. The premises comprise a large room used for general purposes as a reading-room, an apartment as a gymnasium, and a third hall in which are held educational classes. Lectures and entertainments are regularly given, a Bible Class, Debating Society, Chess and Football Clubs have been started, while Swimming and Cricket Clubs are in course of formation. At the opening of the proceedings the boys of the institute sang the hymn, "Work, for the night is coming," and prayer having been offered by the Rev. Henry Simon, the hon. secretary (Mr. H. W. Just) read the report of the committee, which stated that the general conduct of the boys had been a source of satisfaction.

The noble Chairman, who was enthusiastically received, said that the interest which he took in the institution compelled him to attend, though he was scarcely able to leave his house owing to a severe cold. He wished that every locality in London had an institution of this kind. He impressed upon his young listeners the necessity of not only improving themselves mentally, and in their various trades and businesses, but of habituating themselves in Christian and human virtues.

Shortly after the close of his address Lord Shaftesbury, feeling ill, was obliged to leave, and Quintin Hogg, Esq., at the request of his lordship, occupied the chair.

The speakers were Mr. R. J. Curtis (of the Ragged School Union), the Rev. F. Thompson, Mr. J. Bonthorn, Mr. Hill (of the Working Lads' Institute), and Mr. Quintin Hogg.

YOUTHS' INSTITUTE, OLD PYE STREET, WESTMINSTER.

The eighth anniversary of this institute was lately celebrated at the Westminster Working Men's Club, Old Pye Street. The chair was occupied by Sir R. W. Carden, M.P.

The drum and fife band performed a selection of music.

Prizes were distributed by the genial Chairman for attendance at the Bible Class, for excellence in Dictation, Geometry, in Old English Writing, &c. The prizes which seemed to have the greatest interest were those for swimming, this being a subject in which the chairman takes a particular interest, as he presents yearly the sum of £2 2s. for distribution among the lads, and Mr. Waldo-Sibthorp £1; Mrs. Barker-Harrison offering a silver medal, value £1 7s., for competition, which becomes the property of the boy who wins it twice. The champion swimmer, having won the medal last year, now received it from the hands of Mrs. Barker-Harrison, who pinned it on his coat, the rest of the

lads giving the winner a hearty cheer.

Sir Robert Carden was asked to accept a small token of regard, a portrait-case, made in walnut wood, by James Sweeney, one of the members; and, in acknowledging it, the Chairman said he should keep it and value it more than if it were gold and silver.

The report was read by Mr. Payne, which expressed deep gratitude for the goodness and mercy of God. The Youths' Institute, during the nine years of its existence, had had 604 lads as members, following 135 different occupations. Of these it was known that 51 had joined various corps of volunteers; 3 had joined the army and seen active service, one of whom was wounded in the Transvaal, and another more recently at Ramleh, while carrying a wounded comrade off the field of battle; one had joined the navy; 14 were married, and occasionally pay a visit to the institute. Of the fifteen efforts put forth in that place eleven were educational. The medal presented for swimming was the third presented during a period of six years, and a similar one would be offered for further competition. During the year a new feature had been introduced, coffee and light refreshments being sold at a cheap rate, and this appears to have been appreciated.

The meeting was addressed by the Rev. F. Aglionby, Messrs. Kirk, Rae, Allen, and Kennedy.

DR. BARNARDO'S GREAT ANNUAL GATHERINGS.

Recently a large gathering of the factory girls from Bryant and May's, Bell and Black's, Royal Hunt, and other factories in the neighbourhood of Bow and Stratford, met at the Edinboro' Castle, where about 1,400 sat down to a bountiful tea, and were afterwards treated to an enjoyable entertainment.

The boys and girls of the lodging-houses were invited by ticket to tea at the Edinboro' Castle. Some 1,200 came, and from their number some suitable cases were selected for the various Homes. Dr. Barnardo issued invitations also to the degraded men and women of the common lodging-houses. Over 1,200 tickets were given out, and 1,000 presented themselves in answer to the invitations. The conditions for admission were that they should be over sixty years of age and without a regular home.

A TEACHER AND HIS CLASS AT TEA TOGETHER.

Great benefit has accrued from a teacher taking home his class, or some refractory member of it, for a cup of tea and friendly intercourse. Many teachers would like to do this, but their homes may be distant, or it may be otherwise inconvenient. To meet this difficulty, Mr. Moore, the superintendent of Chequer Alley, invites now one and now another class, with its teacher, to take tea in the school on Sunday afternoons. In each case the result has been most satisfactory. In the advanced classes a secretary and visitor have been chosen by the class to make quarterly reports of lessons and attendance, and to report on absentees.

MILDMAY AVENUE.

The annual meeting of this excellent mission was recently held at

Salter's Hall Chapel. The report showed an amount of productive work among children and adults; their bodies and souls had been cared for. Mr. Tee gave a graphic account of a Flower and Fruit Show, which showed the lively interest taken in it by the poorest of the poor. The Rev. A. Bax presided.

FOX COURT RAGGED SCHOOL.

The Committee of this Institution again invited the parents of the children attending these schools to the annual gathering on March 2, for which purpose the Benchers of the Honourable Society of Gray's Inn had lent their ancient hall. There were about 350 fathers and mothers present, for whom a substantial tea was provided, and to which ample justice was done, and during which a few kindly words were addressed to them by Sir Robert W. Carden, M.P., who, in consequence of another engagement, was obliged to leave before the programme of the evening commenced. After tea Lord Shaftesbury, the president of the schools, took the chair, and was supported by Sir William Wheelhouse, Q.C., treasurer of Gray's Inn; the Revs. A. Taylor (chaplain of the Inn), H. C. Douglas, A. Griffiths, LL.B., B. Sc., C. A. Keightley, Messrs F. Saunders, R. Melville Beachcroft, C. E. Fry, H. W. Elcum, and Thomas Fagg (the hon. secretary). An interesting programme was then carried out, including short addresses, interspersed with anthems, choruses, etc., effectively rendered by the Fox Court Choir and a few friends, conducted by Mr. Thos. Bound.

BRACKLEY STREET MISSION.

The anniversary of this important and unique work was held at 18, Wood Street, E.C., on Tuesday, March 13th. Samuel Morley, E-q., M.P., presided. The report, which was printed and placed in the hands of all present, gave an account of the House to House Visitation Mission Services, Mothers' Meetings, Day and Sunday Schools, and other operations which had during the year been most successfully conducted. Mr. Minchin, the missionary, dwelt in a brief and compact speech on some of the most interesting parts of the report, and the Revs. D. Roe, E. A. Stewart, M.A., A. Rowland, LL.B., B.A., and the chairman, addressed the meeting with great power.

TOWER HAMLETS MISSION.

The fourteenth anniversary of the Tower Hamlets Mission took place on March 26th in the Great Assembly Hall, Mile-end-road, which was crowded in every part by an appreciative audience. It had been expected that Lord Shaftesbury would take the chair on the occasion, but at the opening of the proceedings Mr. Charrington, the leader of the mission, read the following letter from him:—"It grieves me much that I cannot be at the meeting on Monday. I have been suffering such intense pain from the effects of the late severe weather that I am not allowed to be out at night. Pray express my sorrow to my friends at the meeting." The Rev. W. R. Mowll was then appointed to preside over the business of the evening. Mr. Charrington then read a statement of the work done during the past year. During that time the Sunday School had doubled itself, while the Band of Hope and the Evening Ser-

vices for Children had greatly improved in position. Boys to the number of 104 had passed through the Boys' Home, and several of them had had situations found for them, and £2,000 had been deposited by the members of the Provident Club. Upwards of 100 young working men now belonged to the Evangelists' Mission, as they thought the best way to reach the masses was to send the masses to the masses. The number of members in the Gospel Temperance Society was 389, and of these they only knew of three who had broken the pledge.

HARLEY HALL, BOW.

Miss Guinness has had some nice bills printed to be given away. They are on good paper and printed in clear bold type. It is headed "Pleasant Evenings for Working Girls." They are held on three evenings weekly. One evening is for girls under fifteen, and two evenings for girls over fifteen. At the foot of one of the bills it states that "tea is provided at 1d. each, and we have reading, writing, singing and needlework to make the evening pleasant."

GRAVESEND RAGGED SCHOOLS.

The Mayor of Gravesend (Mr. G. H. Edmonds) presided at the twenty-ninth annual meeting of the Ragged School on Monday evening, March 12, at the Assembly Rooms in Harmer Street. The hall was decorated with the curious silken flags captured during the Chinese war, and presented by General Gordon to the Ragged School, of which he was a teacher.

The Mayor expressed the pleasure it gave him to be present on that occasion, saying that while he must confess that he himself was but little acquainted with Ragged School work, there were those present, and among them his old friend Mr. H. R. Williams, whose knowledge of the subject was intimate. His experience of Ragged Schools was limited to filling up a subscription card amongst his friends, and to carving the meat at a Christmas dinner, where he was assured that in furthering Ragged School work he would never be out of pocket. On finishing his duties as carver, and proceeding home, he found in his pocket sundry pieces of fat — (laughter) — which doubtless had been deposited there by the young urchins who had evidently learnt that to waste not was to want not. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) He trusted that that meeting would result in a still further accession of earnest workers to the institution, of which he could say that an inspection of the school and its kindred associations had given him a large amount of satisfaction. (Applause.)

Major McKown, the Hon. Secretary, read the twenty-ninth annual report, of which the following is a summary:—

"The Sunday School is essentially the work of the Institution, and the increasing number of the poor children who have flocked to the School has shown the need for it. From their want of cleanliness and roughness of manner, it is clear that few of them would be admitted into any ordinary Sunday School. The average attendance had been, January to March and October, afternoon, 93; evening, 225.

"In the spring of the year a com-

munication was made to the teachers by scholars from sixteen to eighteen years of age, who had passed through the School, which resulted in the formation of a senior class. The winter evenings had been devoted to sol-fa singing, to reading, and innocent games. A good lending library had been provided by the Committee. To four of the scholars the prizes of the Ragged School Union had been awarded for keeping their situations over a twelvemonth. At the sewing-class for girls, the average attendance had been 28, while 43 women had attended the mothers' meeting. In the Penny Bank £470 14s. 1d. had been deposited to the end of the year, and a balance remained of £141 6s. 1d. The number of depositors on each Saturday is rarely below 100. The Soup Kitchen had supplied 1,346 dinners to adults, and 3,644 dinners to children.

"At the parents' meeting upwards of 200 assembled at a meat tea, and a musical entertainment and speeches followed The School Treats made 356 children happy. A weekly entertainment had been provided for the parents of the children during the winter months.

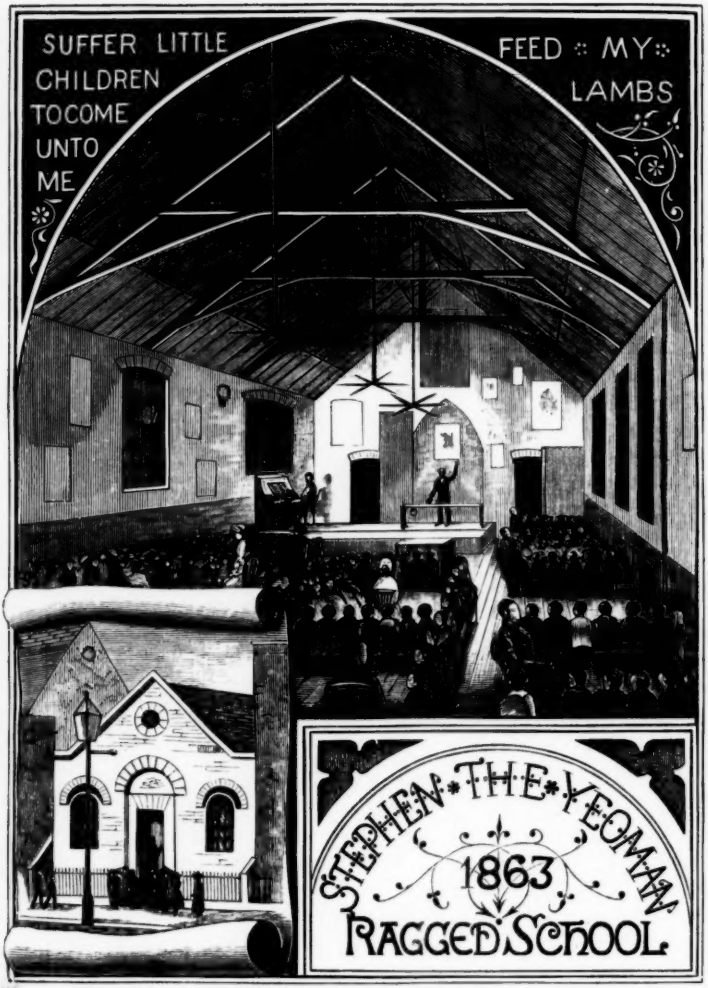
"The Christmas dinner to the poor was again undertaken by the Committee, 825 tickets being issued, each entitling the holder to a hot dinner of roast beef, plum-pudding, and potatoes, besides a 2lb. loaf and an ounce of tea. 49 inmates of the almshouses were also supplied with the same fare. Afterwards 154 tramps and others from the lodging-houses cleared up the fragments."

The Hon. Treasurer read his report, which showed total receipts amounting to £104 13s. 5½d., total expenses £128 17s. 5d., so that a balance appeared due to the Treasurer of £24 3s. 11½d.

The Rev. E. Bolton moved "That the report and Treasurer's accounts be adopted and circulated under the direction of the Committee."

The resolution was seconded by Mr. H. R. Williams, who remarked that his wide experience of Ragged Schools taught him that their institution was about the cheapest thing in Gravesend, the Committee having established a very wise economy in dealing with the multiplicity of duties that were performed in connection with these Schools. He might hope the mayor would give a little more of his time, and exert himself a little more in promoting education in Gravesend, and undoubtedly it was a fact that Ragged School training would always be found to pay. (Applause.) "Kid-glove" teachers were not wanted in Ragged School work, and, notwithstanding the Board schools, they had continually with them a class of children who sorely needed Christian sympathy and help, and who found these through the instrumentality of such institutions. (Hear, hear.)

The meeting was addressed by the Rev. G. Murphy, the Rev. F. Shaw, and other gentlemen.



Marigold Place, Bermondsey. [*See page* 113.